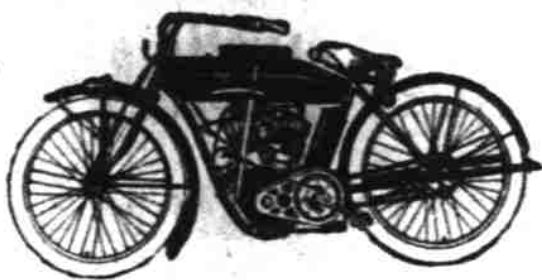


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## LOWERING OF WATER RATES IS VICTORY AFTER LONG CAMPAIGN

**Chamber of Commerce Worked for Reduction of Charges to Shipping**

Announcement in the Star-Bulletin yesterday that water rates both to shipping in the harbor and to individual consumer in the city are to be lowered, means that a long and strenuous campaign on the part of business interests and the press has been successful, and that the beginning of a steady reduction of water charges is in sight.

The harbor commissioners, the governor, the superintendent of public works, the commercial bodies and the newspapers have been advocating the lowering of rates for many months. It was announced by the governor yesterday that the rates will be materially reduced for ships beginning January 1, and a 1-cent per thousand gallons reduction has already been made to city consumers.

Superintendent of Public Works Campbell, who is also chairman of the harbor commission, says that the installation of the water meters is responsible for the ability of the water works to cut its charges to consumers, and believes that as more meters are installed, the reduction can be continued.

The long campaign for lower rates is emphasized by correspondence of the chamber of commerce on the subject. Below are published first a letter from Davies & Co., agents for the Canadian-Australian line, to the chamber of commerce, second a letter from Davies & Co. to the harbor commission, and third the report of the harbor, shipping and transportation committee of the chamber to the chamber's president and trustees, as long ago as last March, wherein the exorbitant charges were scored and the rapid installation of a meter system advocated.

HONOLULU, T. H., Oct. 22, 1912. The President, The Chamber of Commerce, Honolulu.

Dear Sir:—We beg leave to hand you herewith a copy of a letter which we have addressed to the Harbor Commissioners on the subject of water rates charged to steamers visiting this port.

On enquiry we are informed that Honolulu consumers are charged 7.5c per 1000 gallons for their water. Most vessels are charged an advance on this price of 2.42 1/2 per 1000 gallons, or \$2.50 per 1000 gallons. We understand that certain favored vessels receive water at less than that figure, but the charge is in a general way that which is made to all foreign vessels visiting this port.

At a time when so much is said about Honolulu becoming a port of call for vessels needing coal, water and supplies, it does not seem inopportune for us to suggest to the Chamber of Commerce that it shall use every effort to have the harbor expenses fixed on a reasonable basis, so that the assurance can be given to shipowners that vessels can make use of this port without fear of having to pay absurd prices for either accommodation or supplies.

If it is advertised that for the item of water alone \$2.50 per 1000 gallons is the charge, the natural inference will be that all other items are equally high, and Honolulu will not be a very popular port for transient steamers. There may be some ports in the world, where vessels lie off a long way from shore and have to take their water from barges, when the charge is high, but we do not think there are any such ports where the charge is equal to what it is in Honolulu; certainly there are no, so called, civilized ports, where vessels can go alongside the wharf, where the charge for water is what it is in Honolulu.

Trusting that this matter will receive the early attention of your Chamber,

We are, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Theo. H. Davies &amp; Co. Ltd.,

F. M. SWANZY,

Managing Director.

To Harbor Commission.

HONOLULU, T. H., Oct. 21, 1912.

Marston Campbell, Esq., Chairman, Board of Harbor Commissioners, Honolulu, T. H.

Sir:—We beg leave to submit for the consideration of your Board the high charge for water which the steamers visiting this port are obliged to pay.

For such water as the Government can supply through its water system a charge is made to the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Line of 1/4c per gallon—\$2.50 per thousand gallons.

When the Government system is unequal to the demand on it, recourse has to be taken to the Water Boats of private concerns, who charge 3/4c, or \$7.50 per 1000 gallons.

When the "Zealandia" was last in port the Government was unable to deliver more than 43,309 gallons in the time the vessel was in port, say 6 1/2 hours or at the rate of 6660 gallons per hour, consequently it was necessary to take water from a Barge and 57,960 gallons were so taken. The total water taken by the "Zealandia" on that occasion was therefore 101,269 gallons, which cost \$542.97 of 5.36c per gallon or \$536 per 1000 gallons.

It would seem superfluous to make any comment on such a charge; it is so obviously out of all reason. In explanation of this charge we can only state to the Steamship Company the simple facts, which are that even at \$2.50 per 1000 gallons the Government cannot supply steamers visiting this port with water unless they can stay long enough to take it at the rate at which the Government can furnish it; which in the case of the "Zealandia" above quoted would be approximately 15 hours.

We strongly represent first that the Government should without delay get its water system so arranged that it can deliver to visiting vessels such water as they require within a reasonable time, and secondly, that the charge for such water be reduced to say one-tenth of the present rate.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

Theo. H. Davies &amp; Co. Ltd.

March 12, 1912.

To the President and Trustees of the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce, Gentlemen: Complying with your request, your Committee on Harbors, Shipping and Transportation has had a conference with the Board of Harbor Commissioners on the subject of rate on water furnished to vessels at this port.

The present rate to vessels is \$2.50 per M. gallons, which is certainly exorbitant, especially when compared with the rate of 7 1/2c. to city consumers. This rate has been in force ever since the Honolulu Water Works system was constructed and of course was originally imposed under conditions very different from those existing at the present time. It has, however, been the subject of continual complaint and dissatisfaction on the part of ship owners and masters who make Honolulu a port of call.

The San Francisco rate is on a sliding scale basis, varying from about 67c per M. gallons for the first 2,000 cubic feet down to 32c. for any amount in excess of 70,000 cubic feet, or 323,636 U. S. gallons. This makes the rate for a vessel taking, say 525,000 gallons, about 43c per M. gallons, as compared with our rate of \$2.50. The rate at Sydney is 25c flat per M. gallons and the same at Suva. At Tacoma, Washington, we are told that the rate is only \$10 for each vessel, regardless of the amount supplied.

It is therefore evident that our rate is exceedingly unjust, so much so that one of the large transportation companies has under serious consideration making other arrangements here for its water supply. Unless a very material reduction is made, the excessive charge for water was given for one of the reasons why the cable ship "Restorer" ceased to make her headquarters at Honolulu.

In view of the important part which it is hoped that this port may play in the future development of Pacific Ocean commerce, the harbor conditions and port charges in general should be such as will tend to attract shipping rather than to drive it away. We can see no valid reason why water should not be supplied to vessels at

the same rate as to any other consumer, plus the extra cost of making delivery. It is estimated that the actual cost of delivering water to ships at Honolulu is about 25c. per M. gallons, which would compare favorably with other Pacific Ocean ports.

The one great difficulty in reducing the rates at this time is the serious diminution in revenue which would result to the water works and sewer system.

In this connection we submit herewith statement kindly furnished us by the Superintendent of Public Works, from which you will note that of the \$150,000 approximately received for water during the year ending December 31, 1911, \$34,800 came from shipping, or over 23 per cent, although the total amount of water supplied to ships would not amount to over a day's supply to the city in general. The same statement shows that taking water and sewer rates together, there was a surplus of \$3,712.82 after deducting expenses, interest on bonds and sinking fund. After the balance of the \$500,000 of new bonds is expended, the Department estimates that there will be a yearly deficit of \$11,000 on the present basis. One of the reasons given for this deficit is the reduction in sewer receipts on account of the reduction of rates made by the last Legislature.

An investigation of the rates charged for water in the principal cities of the United States shows that the Honolulu base rate of 7 1/2c per M. gallons is very low. For instance, in California the San Francisco rate is 23c., Oakland 25c., Santa Barbara 25c., Stockton 25c., and Los Angeles 10c., all on meter basis as compared with our flat rate based on 7 1/2c. It will be remembered that the climatic conditions prevailing in California cities require as much, if not more, irrigation for lawns, etc., than is necessary here. Your committee fully realizes that in a climate such as ours water should be furnished at the lowest possible rates, and we would be strenuously opposed to any increase in the existing rate to consumers even for the purpose of lowering the rate to shipping.

Under existing conditions we believe the remedy is:

1. To check the large waste in the use of water which is known to exist under the present system; and
2. To get the actual cost of delivering water down to the lowest possible figure and make such actual cost the basis of rates to consumers.

We are informed that recent investigations by the Public Works, and also an extensive study by the Sanitary Commission, showed conclusively that an enormous amount of water is actually wasted after the Territory has paid for its delivery. Furthermore, the Territory is again called to pump the greater part of this same water out of the sewers. While we have no definite estimates or figures on the subject, we believe that if the expense of supplying and getting rid of the large amount of water actually wasted could be eliminated, the rate to vessels could be placed on a reasonable basis without increasing the cost of water to the general consumer. This can only be accomplished by the extension of the meter system as rapidly as possible, so that each consumer will pay for the water he gets, whether he uses it properly or not.

We understand that funds will be available for installing meters about August 1st, when the balance of the bond money becomes available. Until something can be done to remedy the evils of the present water works system, we do not see how the rates to shipping can be reduced from the present high figure.

On the line of general policy, we would, therefore, submit the following recommendations:

1. That the rate on water supplied to vessels at Honolulu be reduced as rapidly as the finances of the water works and sewer department will permit, to a figure representing the rate to the general consumer, plus cost of delivery.
2. That the Superintendent of Public Works be urged to check the waste of water in Honolulu by the extension of the meter system as rapidly as possible.
3. That the meter rates to consumers be at all times the very lowest rate which can be made under economical and efficient management, after paying expenses, maintenance, interest on bonds and necessary extensions of the water works system. In other words, that the water works and sewer system be made self-sustaining on the most economical basis and without profit to the government.

Respectfully submitted,

E. E. PAXTON,

Chairman;

E. D. TENNEY,

E. H. WODEHOUSE,

Committee on Harbors, Shipping and Transportation.

The Duchess of Portland is urging through the newspapers of London the abolition of cigarette-smoking and cigarette-wearing.

Respectfully submitted,

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